

Red Clay Consolidated School District
The Charter School of Wilmington
2018-2019 Accountability Committee
Report and Recommendations

Criterion 1.

The individuals and entities submitting the application are experienced and qualified to start and operate a charter school, and to implement the school's proposed educational program. Certified teachers, parents, and members of the community in which the school is to be located must be involved in the development of the proposed charter school. At the time at which the school commences its instructional program and at all times thereafter, the board of directors must include a teacher at the school and a parent of a student enrolled at the school as members.

Committee Summary:

As stated in the 1995 Charter School of Wilmington (CSW) charter application, the “application was prepared and is supported by a diverse group of local and multinational businesses and parents, teachers, and community members.”

The SY 2018–19 board of directors includes a teacher at the school and a parent of a student enrolled at the school as members.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 1.

Criterion 2.

The chosen form of organization, identified in the articles of incorporation and bylaws, or the membership agreement, conforms to the Delaware General Corporation Law.

Committee Summary:

The chosen form of organization, as identified in the CSW’s Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws, conforms to the Delaware General Corporation Law. As stated in the CSW’s 1995 charter application, the CSW was incorporated on September 29, 1995 as a non-profit corporation pursuant to the provisions of the general corporation law of the State of Delaware. One purpose of the corporation is “to organize and run a charter school under the Charter School Act of 1995 (14 Del.C. §§501 et seq.).”

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 2.

Criterion 3.

The mission statement, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the description of legislative intent set forth in 14 Del.C. §501 and the restrictions on charter school operations set forth in 14 Del.C. §506.

Committee Summary:

According to the CSW website, the mission of the CSW is “to engage highly motivated high school students with an interest in math and science by providing a challenging college-preparatory curriculum in a safe, friendly, and nurturing environment that integrates practical learning opportunities, sets high expectations, develops social responsibility, and promotes a global perspective.”

As described in the CSW's 1995 charter application, the goal of the CSW is "to enhance the quality of public education in Delaware by developing a unique, model school that utilizes the most effective educational techniques and ensures equal educational opportunity, thus meeting the needs of students, the business community, and society."

The educational objectives identified on the CSW website are "to prepare students who are thoroughly educated in mathematics and science, to prepare students who are broadly educated in the humanities, to prepare students who are technologically literate and understand the operation and use of computers and laboratory instruments, to prepare students who are able to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, and to prepare students who are firmly grounded in character development."

The CSW's mission statement, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the description of legislative intent set forth in 14 Del.C. §501, which is "to improve student learning; encourage the use of different and innovative or proven school environments and teaching and learning methods; provide parents and students with measures of improved school and student performance and greater opportunities in choosing public schools within and outside their school districts; and to provide for a well-educated community." The CSW's mission statement, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the restrictions on charter school operations set forth in 14 Del.C. §506.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 3.

Criterion 4.

The school has set goals for student performance and will utilize satisfactory indicators to determine whether its students meet or exceed such goals and the academic standards set by the state. The indicators shall include the assessments required for all students in other public schools, although the charter school may adopt additional performance standards or assessment requirements, and shall include timelines for the achievement of student performance goals and the assessment of such performance.

Committee Summary:

The CSW's State Report Card/Accountability was reviewed from the past 3 years. Results from 2017 show CSW earned 5 out of 5 stars in every category: academic achievement, growth, on-track to graduation and college/career readiness. Additionally the accountability report showed 92.77% for post-secondary outcomes, the percent of students who complete education and career training beyond high school and thus have a greater likelihood of future employment with higher wages. (DDOE school profiles). CSW also earned 5 out of 5 stars in each category in 2016. Preliminary results for 2018 for school accountability are also favorable with the top rating expected in all categories which now include: academic achievement (SAT Evidence-based Reading and Writing, Mathematics) graduation rate, school quality (college/career preparedness, on-track in 9th grade, and on-track attendance). CSW does not have enough English Learners to qualify for English attainment category of performance. In 2018, CSW performance on SAT Evidence-based Reading and Writing) nearly doubles that of the state (above 95% of students

meeting college-readiness performance standards). At 92% in SAT Math, CSW's performance nearly triples that of the state. CSW does not have enough students in the following subgroups to report progress on SAT (Hispanic, ELL, Low Income, Students with Disabilities). The SAT performance among African-American students was at 89% in Evidence-based Reading and Writing and 72% in Mathematics.

CSW also provided PSAT results for grades 9, 10, and 11. CSW leads the state in scores on PSAT. (CSW requires all 9th graders to take the 10/11 grade version of the PSAT so state results are not comparable).

CSW also leads the state in Advanced Placement (AP) exam results. In 2018, 392 students took 1070 exams. CSW average score (out of 5 points) was 3.82, compared to 2.90 across the state and 2.97 nationally. 90% of CSW AP students earned scores 3 or higher, compared to 61% in the state and 61% globally. The percentage of CSW AP students earning scores of 3 or higher has exceeded 90% for over five years.

School profiles show that 100% of students in 2017 graduated in four years. The prior year more than 98% of students across all sub-groups graduated in four years.

The CSW continues to receive national recognition for its programs and performance: ranked #2 on Niche's 2018 Best Charter Schools in America List, ranked the #13 STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) High School in the nation by U.S. News & World Report (April, 2017).

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 4.

Criterion 5.

The school proposes a satisfactory plan for evaluating student performance and procedures for taking corrective action in the event that student performance at the charter school falls below such standards which are reasonably likely to succeed.

Committee Summary:

CSW has established multiple systems to ensure satisfactory student performance. One example is the "Charter Readiness for Students Program" or CRSP which provides support to targeted students based on math placement scores. These supports begin before arrival to CSW and continue to be provided during the school-year through the activity block. In addition, CSW has an established system for Homework Help, allowing students to receive homework support weekly (Wednesday and Thursday) during the activity block. Additionally, CSW pairs all freshman with a senior mentor for additional support. This partnership begins during freshman orientation and continues with monthly meetings during the advisory block. Finally, freshman participate in a series of seminar/assemblies introducing students to study skills, healthy habits, and stress management.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 5.

Criterion 6.

The school's educational program, including curriculum and instructional strategies, has the potential to improve student performance; and must be aligned to meet the Delaware Content Standards and state program requirements, and in the case of a charter high school, state graduation requirements. High school programs must provide driver education. The educational program at all charter schools must include the provision by the school of extra instructional time for at-risk students, summer school, and other services required to be provided by school districts pursuant to the provisions of 14 Del.C. §153. A previously approved charter school may continue to operate in compliance with the terms of its current approval, but its charter shall not be renewed unless the school shall submit an application for renewal in full compliance with the requirements of this subsection.

Committee Summary:

CSW's academic focus is Math, Science, and Computer Education. This focus is supported using a challenging college preparatory curriculum with a STEM focus. Students are grouped into "phases" based on assessment information obtained during the acceptance/entrance process. The three phases include College Prep (74th to 84th percentile), Accelerated College Prep (85th to 92nd percentile, and College Prep Honors (93rd to 99th percentile). The use of phases allows classroom instruction to be tailored to the abilities of students encouraging maximum growth and academic achievement. In addition to the college preparatory curriculum a variety of Advanced Placement choices are available to students.

In addition to a rigorous curriculum, CSW requires a minimum of 24.5 credits to earn graduation compared to the requirement of 24.0 credits required at the state level. This requirement includes: Math (4.0), Science (4.5), Computer Science (0.5), English (4.0), Social Science (3.0), World Languages (2.0), Math/Science/Computer Elective (1.0), Physical Education (1.0), Health (0.5), Elective (3.5), and Junior Research Project (0.5). Note: Drivers Education is integrated into the 10th grade curriculum.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 6.

Criterion 7.

The school's educational program sets forth appropriate strategies to be employed to accommodate the needs of at-risk students and those needing special education services.

Committee Summary:

Seven students with IEPs and fifty students with 504 Plans are currently enrolled. In the 2014 accountability review, CSW enrolled seven students with IEPs and 17 students with 504 Plans. While the number of students with IEPs has not changed, there has been a significant increase in the number of students with 504 Plans.

CSW has hired a full-time Special Education Coordinator to facilitate IEP and 504 Plan meetings and work with staff to ensure student IEPs and 504s are implemented with fidelity. The committee reviewed the DOE Annual Determination for Special Education (IDEA) made public in May 2018, and CSW received a rating of “Meets Requirements.”

Committee Recommendations:

The Committee recommends that the CSW continue its effort to inform prospective applicants that the school is open to students with disabilities and that accommodations are provided for the admission exam. It is also recommended that the CSW continue to actively attempt to attract students from underrepresented sub-groups to mirror the percentage of such students enrolled in the Red Clay Consolidated School District. The CSW should establish an Instructional Support Team and related processes to support students not identified under IDEA or Section 504 who are experiencing academic or social/emotional challenges as required under DE Admin Code 923.11.9.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 7, with recommendations.

Criterion 8

The plan for the school is economically viable, based on a review of the school’s proposed budget of projected revenues and expenditures for the first three years, the plan for starting the school, and the major contracts planned for equipment and services, leases, improvements, purchases of real property, and insurance.

Committee Summary:

The Committee reviewed audited financial statements and current and prior year budgets. The CSW maintains a sufficient and healthy fund balance of approximately \$4.2 million as of the close of the last audited fiscal year. CSW’s budgeted expenditures match available revenues. Salary expenditures, the largest expenditure item in the budget, maintain a consistent percentage in the overall budget. The facility lease with Red Clay Consolidated School District is ongoing through 2024, provisional on the renewal of their Charter during the lease period.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 8.

Criterion 9

The school’s financial and administrative operations meet or exceed the same standards, procedures and requirements as a school district. If a charter school proposes to operate outside the state’s pension and/or benefits system, a specific memorandum of understanding shall be developed and executed by the charter school, the approving authority, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Controller General and the secretary of Finance to assure that the state’s fiduciary duties and interests in the proper use of the appropriated funds and as a benefits and pension trustee are fulfilled and protected, the state’s financial reporting requirements are satisfied, and the interests of charter school employees are protected. All charter schools shall operate within the Delaware Financial Management System (DFMS) and

be subject to all of the same policies and procedures which govern other agencies operating with such system, except that any charter school previously approved to operate outside of the DFMS may continue to so operate subject to the terms of its memorandum of understanding until such time as the school's charter is renewed pursuant to this chapter.

Committee Summary:

CSW operates within the State's financial system and employees are members of the state pension and benefits plans. The Committee reviewed the last three years of the CSW's annual audited financial statements (FY 2016, 2017 and 2018) as well as current financial documentation. The auditors have concluded "no material reportable conditions" in their review and preparation of the CSW's Basic Financial Statements. CSW remains fully compliant with posting audits, annual budgets and monthly reports of the Citizens Budget Oversight Committee.

Committee Recommendations:

In reviewing the FY 2018 audited financial statement the auditors noted that almost \$70,000 in cash was held at the school. This criterion has been met with the following recommendation- It is recommended that a nominal petty cash fund of less than \$500 be held at the school and all other funds should be deposited to either a student funds account or to the school's local FSF appropriation.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 9, with recommendations.

Criterion 10

The assessment of the school's potential legal liability and the types and limits of insurance coverage the school plans to obtain are adequate.

Committee Summary:

The Committee reviewed the insurance policy of the CSW and determined it has adequate types and limits of coverage. CSW is working with Red Clay Consolidated School District on coordinating coverage where students from Cab Calloway and CSW overlap so as to provide sufficient coverage without duplicating. CSW utilizes the same insurance vendor as Red Clay Consolidated to insure sufficient coverage without duplication.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 10.

Criterion 11.

The procedures the school plans to follow to discipline students and ensure its students' adherence to school attendance requirements comply with state and federal law.

Committee Summary:

Upon the review of the CSW's student handbook, all policies and procedures are in alignment and meet the requirements of the Delaware Department of Education. The school's discipline procedures and policies support a safe school environment for students, staff, parents, and

community members. In addition to the established policies, the CSW's is in compliance with the state's mandatory training.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 11.

Criterion 12.

The procedures the school plans to follow to assure the health and safety of the students, employees, and guests of the school while they are on school property are adequate and that the charter school will comply with the applicable provisions of local, state, and federal law, including the provisions of 11 Del.C. Ch. 85.

Committee Summary:

The CSW is in compliance with local, state, and federal requirements/laws which address the safety of students, staff, and community members. The school's plan and procedures are in compliance with the Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security. Also, the school has submitted all Incident Command Team information

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 12.

Criterion 13.

The school shall have a satisfactory plan for timely transferring student data and records to the Department of Education.

Committee Summary:

CSW has no outstanding complaints from the Department of Education regarding record keeping.

The Committee reviewed several documents outlining CSW's procedures regarding record keeping. The CSW is professional in their handling of Red Clay and Delaware Department of Education paperwork requests. The distribution of responsibilities at the school works well in completing assigned tasks.

The CSW has accurate written policies and procedures for the preparation of the September 30th Unit Count, which were implemented as early as the 2003-2004 school year.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 13.

Criterion 14.

The school's board of directors shall annually certify to the Delaware Department of Education, on a form to be provided by the Delaware Department of Education, that prior

to the payment of any fees or other sums to any management company employed by the board, the board will insure that sufficient revenues of the school are devoted to adequately support the school's proposed educational program. Such form of certification may require documentation of all actual or proposed expenditures by the school. Failure to provide sufficient funds to adequately support the school's proposed education program shall be grounds for revocation of the school's charter.

This criterion is not applicable since no management company is involved.

Criterion 15

The school shall have a satisfactory plan to ensure the effectiveness of its board of trustees, including governance trainings conducted for any new board members and at a minimum of once every three years.

Committee Summary:

CSW was unable to prove that all Board Members were in compliance with governance trainings. CSW is directed to provide a list of Board Members, dates for which they were trained and a plan for any Board Members who have not been trained.

The CSW has NOT met the standards of Criterion 15.

Criterion 16

The school shall have a satisfactory plan for procedures it will follow in the case of the closure or dissolution of the school, including a plan to set aside sufficient funds to cover the salaries owed to those employees who are paid over a 12-month period. For a new applicant granted under this chapter, the application shall include a reasonable plan to establish sufficient available balances pursuant to § 516(1) of this title.

Committee Summary:

The CSW will utilize the Red Clay Consolidated School District closure protocols in the case of closure or dissolution. Those protocols are publicized on the Red Clay Consolidated School District website and they have been made available for CSW leadership.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 16.